* A Central Electricity Regulatory Commission has been set up and States are expected to set up State level Commissions.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Assessment made by M/s. Merrill Lynch Regarding Export Growth

1551. SHRI JIBON ROY:
SHRI C.O. POULOSE:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the assessment made by M/s. Merrill Lynch that there would be no export growth by India during 1998-99;

(b) if so, the reasons given for the assessment;

(c) whether Government have reviewed the matter to find out why there was no export growth despite drastic fall in value of rupee; and

(d) the findings of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) While no specific reasons have been given in the assessment, a slow down of western economy has been cited as a possible reasons for future weakening of exports;

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The exports were affected due to a general slow down in world trade, especially recession in many countries in South East Asia, Japan and Germany, domestic supply constraints in some sectors such as agriculture commodities and barriers faced in markets of European Union

Export of Fruits and Vegetable

1552. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the different fruits and vegetables being exported;

(b) whether Government are aware that due to such exports the prices of fruits and vegetables have gone sky high in the country; and

(c) what stpes Government are taking to stop unlimited export of fruits and vegetables?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) The different fruits and vegetables exported from the country include onions, potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, fresh mushrooms, peas, green chilly, apples, bananas, walnut kernals, fresh pineapple, guava, mangoes, fresh oranges, fresh grapes, grapefruit, papaya, custard apple, strawberries, cherries, pomegranates and chikoos.

(b) and (c) The policy regarding exports of agricultural products is governed principally by the concerns of India's food security, maximising farm income and earning foreign exchange. Review of export performance of agricultural products is an ongoing process and accordingly policy interventions are made, as and when considered necessary to protect the domestic consumers and need to retain export markets. The total quantity of fruits and vegetables exported from the country accounts for merely around 1 percent of the total production in the country and is generally unlikely to have an adverse impact on the domestic prices. The Government has banned the export of onions with effect from 12.10.1998.

Steps to increase Exports of Agricultural and Industrial Produce

1553. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state the details of the steps taken/contemplated by Government to increase exports of our agricultural and industrial produce?